

imprints

The Newsletter of Literacy BC

We Want to Talk to You...

Setting the Agenda for Tomorrow

After almost 10 years, Literacy BC and our key partners are taking some time for reflection. A short pause to take stock, look at what we have accomplished and determine the most effective strategies for the future. Linda Mitchell, Executive Director for Literacy BC, says, "We need to take a footprint. We need to hear what people have to say, and gather information that will give background to create strategies for change in the future."

A year-long consultation process will begin across the province to explore the fundamental issues of literacy awareness, program activities, delivery strategies, policy directions, leadership and sustainability.

"What are the current perceptions about literacy? Why is it an issue and how serious is it for society?"

These are the questions we will be asking to help us - and you - understand the complexity, the changing perception and attitudes, and the importance of literacy relative to other issues.

We want to find out what has been and is being done about

literacy, by whom and how effectively. What are the programs and strategies that are happening in the province?

These questions will help us think about the next steps...what needs to be done in the future and, most importantly, by whom. What should our measures of success be? "We need benchmarks for evaluation so that in the future we can judge if the strategies we have put in place have made a difference", says Linda.

As part of the consultation, you may meet us as we travel through your community or hear from us by telephone. We will be engaging employers, unions, educational institutions, community organizations, government, media, learners and anyone else interested and involved in the future of literacy and learning in British Columbia. Linda, along with Stacey Huget, Special Projects Consultant for Literacy BC, and Maxine Adam, Coordinator of our Workforce Literacy Initiative, will be busy this fall and winter reaching out for information that will help shape specific recommendations for future literacy strategies in BC.

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Provincial Literacy News ...

Four B.C. Winners in Canada Post Awards

The annual **Canada Post Literacy Awards** were announced on August 28.

These awards recognize the achievements of learners, educators and organizations in their efforts to overcome barriers to literacy.

Here are the B.C. winners in the three categories:

Individual Literacy Achievement Award — celebrates the accomplishments of learners who have successfully

overcome social or economic barriers by improving their literacy skills.

Connie De Melo of Castlegar

Connie has been a learner with the Project Literacy West Kootenay in Castlegar for nine years, and has attended ABE programs at Selkirk College. When her husband became blind, 60 year old Connie couldn't even pay bills on her own because she couldn't read. Now, after a



decade of learning, Connie writes poetry and helps her granddaughter with homework.

Connie is also the **winner of the 2000 Cooperators Learner for B.C.**

Achievement Award. Watch for a story on Connie and her achievements in our next newsletter. Congratulations, Connie!

Educator Award — honours educators, tutors or program initiators for their dedication and commitment to literacy. Only five Educators are honoured in Canada. This is the first year that two winners have been announced in B.C. They are Sally Gellard and Karen Taylor.

Sally Gellard of Vancouver Sally, an Adult Basic Education instructor at Vancouver Community College, King Edward Campus, was honoured for her involvement with the B.E.S.T. program — Basic Education for Skills and Training. B.E.S.T. is a joint union / management workplace literacy program which has been running for two and a half years at the Children and Women's Health Centre in

Setting the Agenda for Tomorrow... (Cont'd)

Literacy BC will also be hosting a **Provincial Literacy Conference and Forum November 30, December 1 and 2, 2000**, which will be an important part of the consultation process and shaping our **"Agenda for Tomorrow."**

"I am excited about these opportunities to bring people together to create a new vision for literacy in the province. This process will identify our common interests and draw people together so our hands are joined. It will help us find the roadmap for a new vision and will create stronger alliances and partnerships," says Linda. "We will learn how to create a stronger and clearer message about why

literacy is important... messages that resonate...key messages that will help make a difference so people truly value literacy and learning in their lives."

The province wide consultation and the Conference will also help us to recognize there is much to celebrate after ten years of literacy activities, and result in a strong sense of accomplishment.

If you have any questions or want more information please call Linda Mitchell at 1-800-663-1293 or email l_mitchell@douglas.bc.ca

Stacey Huget at (604) 633-2161 or email shuget@att.canada

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Provincial Literacy News ...

Raise-a-Reader Raises Funds

The Vancouver Sun's annual **Raise-A-Reader Day** has been set for **October 26, 2000**. On this day all the proceeds from sales of **The Vancouver Sun** newspaper will go to benefit literacy in BC.

Raise a Reader Day is a unique event that involves a celebrity promotion of the newspaper at numerous downtown

Vancouver street corners. Representatives from the **Grizzlies**, the **Vancouver Sun** and other public and media personalities will join together in a volunteer effort to exchange newspapers for donations in support of the **Raise-A-Reader** campaign.

If you live outside of Vancouver, you too can support this campaign ... On October 26 buy The Vancouver Sun newspaper in a special "wrapped" edition, at any **7-ELEVEN** or **Starbucks** store and 100% of the purchase price will be donated to the **Raise a Reader Campaign**.

The campaign has two key objectives:

- To increase awareness of the importance of early childhood literacy
- To raise funds in support of children's literacy

Now in its fourth year, this campaign raises over \$75,000 annually for support materials

and programs. This year, Literacy BC, The Grizzlies Foundation and the Vancouver Public Library will share the proceeds from the campaign.

Following the campaign, Literacy BC will distribute its share of the funds to B.C. family literacy programs. To find out more, contact



Jean Rasmussen,
Projects Coordinator,
Literacy BC (1-800-663-1293).

The Sun's Raise-a-Reader
Hotline number is
(604) 605-2772.

Families & Books Highlight September 8 Celebration

This year Literacy BC will celebrate **International Literacy Day** in a joint event with our partner, **Starbucks Coffee Company**.

On September 8th at 10:00 a.m. Starbucks will kick off its annual **ABC (All Books for Children) Book Drive** at the Vancouver Public Library Central Branch. This is the fourth annual Book Drive for Starbucks and it takes place at each Starbucks location in North America. Starbucks stores collect books from their customers and forward them to literacy organizations in their local community. Since the program began three years ago, more than half a million books have been distributed.

Following the Book Drive, Literacy BC will help Starbucks with the distribution

of the books to family literacy programs across the province. Raincoast Books, a prominent BC publisher, is donating more than 700 books to kick off this year's Book Drive.

At the September 8th event, Literacy BC will launch our new Family Literacy Public Awareness Campaign, including the BC Framework of Statements and Standards of Best Practices in Family Literacy. The campaign will provide public awareness and program development tools for current and new family literacy programs across B.C.

Stay tuned for more information on the awareness campaign from us this fall.



Vancouver Public Library

THE WORD ON THE STREET

Mark your calendar for the 6th annual Vancouver **Word on the Street** Festival on **Sunday, September 24** at the Vancouver Public Library and the CBC Plaza.

Thousands of enthusiastic readers and aspiring writers

will enjoy a day of readings, booksellers and publishers' exhibits, literacy promotion, family activities and live performances in tents set up around the square and the plaza.

At Starbucks Literacy Lane look for:

- **The Honda Family Literacy Tent**— fun and activities for the whole family
- **Canada Post** — Colourful “thanks for turning me on to reading” postcards provided free for children to fill in with their message and post in an on-site mailbox. Postcards will be processed with a specially-made Canada Post/Word on the Street logo. Canada Post is donating the postage.
- **The Vancouver Sun** — Discover how to “Raise-a-Reader” and find resources for learning to read for all ages. The Alphabet Soup tent offers readings and entertainment for young readers, the second annual Salute to Dr. Seuss, storytelling, Performers for Literacy and more
- **Orca Bay Grizzlies** — The Grizzlies Inflatable Sole Shot will be there — shoot hoops and take home a bookmark
- **Community Readers and Resources** — exhibits by local literacy and learning organizations

To find out more, contact Word on the Street at (604) 684-8266 or check the WOTS website at: www.canada.wots

Take 5 and Read Campaign Retired

Since 1993, the B.C. Library Association (BCLA) and Literacy BC have spearheaded **Take 5 and READ**, a provincial campaign, to draw public attention to the importance of reading.

After a lot of consultation and thought, it has been decided to “retire” this campaign. BCLA, Literacy BC and other partners will continue to work on vehicles for raising public awareness and for promoting literacy and learning in B.C. In particular, we will be working on the **OCTOBER 26th Raise-A-Reader Campaign** this year with The Vancouver Sun, and **Family Literacy Day** on January 27, 2001, with Honda and ABC CANADA.

We are very grateful to the many and generous sponsors and contributors who over the seven years of the Take 5 and READ campaign have provided support. Our sincere thanks and appreciation to:

B.C. Library Association
B.C. & Yukon Community Newspapers Association
Canada Post
Chapters Books
Coast Paper
Fletcher Challenge Canada Ltd.
Frontier College
Laubach Literacy of Canada (B.C.)

Library Services Branch,
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Project Literacy Vancouver
DPI Digital People Inc
The Insight Group
Hemlock Printers
Vancouver Public Library

BC Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Program

2000/01 Projects

**by Audrey Thomas,
Project Officer,
Developmental Programs
Ministry of Advanced
Education, Training and
Technology**

Over 70 adult literacy projects and grants totalling nearly \$1.7 million have been awarded for the 2000/01 year through the Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Program and the Literacy Corps program. The Cost-Shared program, which has been in existence since 1987, is a partnership with the

National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada. The Literacy Corps program is funded solely by the National Literacy Secretariat but applications have been received at the same time as the cost-shared applications, since 1996.

2000/01 Adult Literacy Cost-Shared projects: Contacts and Goals, can be obtained from Literacy BC or viewed on the Ministry web site at: www.aett.gov.bc.ca/literacy

Note to cost-shared fund applicants — some of you may hear from Carol before October as she is also examining the cost-shared program with a view to making suggestions for potential changes. Please welcome her to the literacy community.

Announcing the New Community Liaison

Carol Larlee is the new **Community Liaison** person for the B.C. Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Program. Carol is replacing Linda Cooney in this position.

With a BEd in Business, an MEd in Adult Education, and five years experience as an independent consultant, Carol brings to us a variety of skills and knowledge in subject areas such as Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, First Nations education, post-secondary education and occupational training.

As the community liaison for the BC Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Program, Carol will liaise with literacy groups regarding their projects and proposals, support the External Review Committee, and assist with the day-to-day responsibilities of managing the cost-shared program. Carol will be available for consultation in October on a part-time basis and will be working full-time from January to May. She can be reached at: Phone: (250) 384-6226
Email: clarlee@direct.ca

Four B.C. Winners in Canada Post Awards (Cont'd)

Vancouver. B.E.S.T. "is designed to help health care workers improve their literacy, numeracy and communication skills in order to access further training and apply for work within different areas of the hospital." Sally works half time with B.E.S.T. and half time in the V.C.C. ABE Department.

Congratulations, Sally!

Karen Taylor, Victoria

Karen, a profoundly deaf teacher, has developed several programs and workshops designed to help deaf children and adults improve their literacy skills.

Karen is an instructor in READ 2000 (Resources in Education for the Adult Deaf), a Sooke School District Community Education program. Her award winning video series and manual, "Deafness and Learning with Karen Taylor" are used in schools throughout the province, as well as the United States and South Africa.

Congratulations, Karen!

Community Leadership

Award— recognizes a literacy or labour organization,

or special community initiative which has demonstrated long term achievement and excellence in literacy programming.

Prince George Public Library

The library was honoured for a variety of literacy programs and initiatives offered over the past 3 years, including:

- "Catch Em in the Cradle," a package for new parents that promotes family literacy
- "Reading Without Rules," a program targeted at "people not comfortable with using the library." The library takes adult and children's literacy collections to non-traditional sites such as transition houses, drop-ins and hospices
- "Reading is Cool" — a set of three posters widely distributed through B.C. libraries spotlighting members of a Prince George hockey club promoting reading and their favourite books

Chief Librarian Edel Toner-Regala notes the library was nominated for the award by the Prince George Mayor and City Council.

Voices Magazine Call for Submissions

Voices magazine is looking for submissions of learner writing and programs to be considered for articles in the new issue to be published in 2001. Voices was last published in 1996.

Voices is looking for powerful learner writing, from beginning through advanced levels. The magazine is committed to using strong, personal learner writing. They are also committed to maintaining the voice and authenticity of the stories.

All submissions must be received no later than December 1, 2000.

Voices is also calling for submissions from literacy programs that would like to be considered for a feature article. These features will be approximately 10 pages in length and will include learner stories with an accompanying article from a staff person giving an overview of the literacy program. The feature concept will be cooperatively developed between Voices and participating program staff.

Programs must notify Voices of their interest in participating on or before September 30, 2000.

It is anticipated that features will be completed by January 15, 2001.

**For more information,
contact**

Lee Weinstein

Voices Literacy Project

5943-182 Street

Surrey, B.C. V3S 4M8

Phone: 584-5424

Fax: 730-6840

Email:

voicesproject@home.com

Nanaimo Hosts Canada Post Awards Presentation

The Canada Post Literacy Awards will be hosted this year by the **Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce**. The awards ceremony will take place on **September 13** at the Four Points Hotel Sheraton in Nanaimo. All the BC winners will attend.

Chapters Books Spring Cleaning Nets Profits for Literacy

A Chapters “Spring Cleaning Book Swap” has generated thousands of used book donations for some local literacy groups and libraries in BC.

During the month of May, in exchange for bringing in a used book (or books) customers received a \$1.00 off the purchase of a new book at participating Chapters stores across Canada. The used books were then donated by Chapters to a local literacy organization or library.

“Donations of every type of book imaginable came in, from chemistry texts to the latest hardcover best sellers” says Chapters Area Marketing Manager Pamela Barclay. “Many stores received boxes of books from customers pleased to donate to their local literacy organization.”

Over 70,000 books were collected across Canada — more than 20,000 in BC. The Langley Chapters store collected more than a thousand books in one week.

Chapters stores and their participating partners were: **Chapters Surrey (Strawberry Hill)** -/ Book P.A.L.S. (Partnership for the Advancement of Literacy Skills) Program, Delta School District

Chapters Richmond — Richmond Family Place

Chapters Victoria — Project Literacy Victoria

Chapters Burnaby (Metrotown) — Burnaby Public Library

Chapters Coquitlam — SHARE Family and Community Services, Coquitlam

Chapters Langley — Langley Public Library

Chapters Vancouver (2 stores) — Vancouver Public Library

Chapters Kelowna and Kamloops — local community groups

Project Literacy Victoria’s Diane Kirby says, “We were thrilled with the response from patrons at the local Chapters store.” Project Literacy Victoria received six cartons of books, totalling hundreds of titles, including hard and soft covers, fiction and non-fiction, children’s

Chapters

literature and “even some very recent Oprah Winfrey Book Club selections.” They are still sorting through the collection, looking for books that meet a variety of reading level needs. They plan to keep some books for their own library, others will be used in their family literacy program, and the remainder will be set aside for a future book sale.

“Chapters has always been very supportive of what we do,” says Diane. “We are very grateful to them for this donation.” Dianne says Chapters has also been “more than willing” to include Project Literacy Victoria materials in their store displays and has also allowed the group space in the children’s section of the store for its Reading and Parenting project.

At Coquitlam SHARE Family and Community Services, the donated books were contributed to their thrift store to raise funds for the organization’s programs and services.

PACE Bursary Fund Finds New Home

Providing financial help for adults taking continuing education courses on a part time basis has been a project of the Pacific Association for Continuing Education (PACE) for the past 14 years. With an initial legacy of \$10,000 from the B.C. Chapter of the Canadian Vocational Association, the PACE membership raised another \$50,000. In 1986, this money was matched by and invested in the Vancouver Foundation and the PACE Bursary Fund was born.

Thanks to the generous support of PACE members over the years, the Fund has grown considerably and is now able to assist many worthy students pay for their tuition and books. Last year the Fund awarded a total of \$12,000 to 38 students with bursaries ranging from \$100 to \$300.

In May of this year, the 28-year old PACE Society voted

to disband and turn over its assets to Literacy BC. The PACE Bursary Fund (the name will continue) will be managed by Literacy BC and is a welcome addition to our goal of supporting adult learners. "Literacy BC is pleased and honoured to become the guardian of the PACE Bursary Fund," says Executive Director Linda Mitchell. "Our

mandate and our strong connection to learner support will ensure that the integrity of the Fund will be maintained. The future joint efforts of Literacy BC and former PACE members to keep the Fund growing will ensure that adults in part time studies will continue to receive the financial assistance they deserve."

How to Apply for PACE Bursary Funds

To be eligible for an award, adults must be a resident of BC, be 19 years or older and able to demonstrate financial need. Awards are given to those who are not able to access other bursaries or scholarships and can show evidence that their program of studies is leading to a personal educational or upgrading goal.

Application forms are available at most post-secondary institutions and school districts or from Literacy BC. Copies of tuition and book receipts as well as a letter explaining the reason for the application should accompany the application form.

The application deadline for this year is September 30.

For more information and application forms, call Literacy BC at 1-800-663-1293.



A HOLE-IN-ONE FOR LITERACY

Almost \$38,000 was raised for Literacy BC at the Tenth Annual PGI Golf Tournament on July 6th.

Thank you to all participants, volunteers, supporters and the following sponsors.

National Sponsors

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Air Canada Canada Post
The Co-operators

Petro-Canada
London Life

National Contributors

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First Air

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Tiger Brand Knitting Co. Ltd.

The Ottawa Citizen

Golf Day Sponsor

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The Province WHERE Vancouver sportmart.ca Quebecor World Inc. MCL Motor Cars (1992) Inc.

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Pacific Blue Cross
BC Hydro
Innovative Fitness Consultants Inc.
Charlie's Chocolate Factory Ltd.
Gotham Steakhouse & Cocktail Bar
The Fairmont Vancouver Airport
Vancouver 86ers
Quebec World Inc.
Bantam Doubleday Dell

A warm and special thank you to our to all our celebrity golfers.

The PGIs gratefully acknowledge the generous support of Human Resources Development Canada, the National Literacy Secretariat and ABC CANADA

The B.C. Literacy Electronic Network and Conferencing Service

The B.C. Literacy Electronic Network and Conferencing Service connects people in literacy from across B.C. and offers opportunities for:

- easy access to relevant and current literacy information and resources
- professional development and training, and access to leading practitioners within the field of adult education
- planning and facilitating group work
- developing and participating in new forums for discussion and learning

Here's what the network can do for you...

Share experiences — Build relationships — Make connections — Develop community — Reduce isolation

To find out how you can be part of this on-line literacy community contact Sandy Middleton at Literacy BC.

Research Front...

Learning from Learners

"How, When, Why and What do Adults With Low Literacy Skills Learn?"

An electronic conference on the B.C. Literacy Electronic Network and Conferencing Service (aka The Hub) - September 15 - December 15, 2000

This fall, join literacy researcher Allan Quigley for an electronic conference on "The Hub" to examine questions such as:

- How, when, why and what do adults with low literacy skills learn on their own? What are the patterns, if any?
- Do these patterns change when they participate in an ABE or literacy program?
- How can research in this area inform practice, policy, and program development?

Background

Despite half a century of organized adult literacy education in Canada (and over

a century of literacy work through Frontier College), we still know remarkably little about the ways adults with low literacy skills actually learn outside of ABE and literacy programs. Many of the stereotypes in the public domain, and in the early literature, suggest they don't really "learn" but merely "cope." Interestingly, there is an extensive body of literature on the self-directed learning of "mainstream" adults, but little written on the self-directed learning skills and learning patterns of adults with low literacy skills.

The stereotypes and the literature, however, are now beginning to be challenged and important questions raised

Continued on Next Page...

Allan Quigley is Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Adult Education, St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Allan has some 30 years of experience as a literacy teacher, researcher, programmer, and policy adviser in government. Originally from Saskatchewan, Allan recently returned to Canada after spending ten years at Pennsylvania State University. He is the author of over 100 books, articles and chapters on literacy with a special focus on participation in literacy education and action research. His current interest lies in researching how and why undereducated adults *engage in learning* and the relationship to why so few participate in education.

Learning from Learners (Cont'd)

about the *engagement of adults with low literacy skills in learning*. The recent International Adult Literacy Survey makes clear how few eligible adults in seven industrialized countries ever attend structured adult education and training programs. It also points out that virtually none of these learners ever visits a public library. Yet, both IALS and a recent Canadian study, *New Approaches to Lifelong Learning*, indicate the phenomenal amount of time adults with less than high school actually do read, do access public knowledge, and do engage in self-directed, informal learning.

This won't be surprising to most ABE or literacy practitioners. But the literature and the (funding) policies of Canada seem to assume that if adults with low literacy skills don't come to programs, they aren't "motivated," "can't be 'reached,'" and "obviously can't be learning." Yet they are—they read newspapers, books, and watch television for information almost as many hours per week as college graduates—and do so with little or no help from others. But how? When? Where? Why? With over 40% of the Canadian population affected by low

literacy skills, these are important—long overdue—questions.

This electronic conference will challenge us to think about the myths, the realities, and the practicalities of how our learners learn on their own. It will encourage us to ask questions of our learners which most of us—learners included—may have never considered before. Above all, it will lead to a critique of the many assumptions we encounter every day about our learners and provide some real strategies on how to engage more adults with low literacy skills in opportunities for learning.

The following are suggested readings for the conference and are available upon request from Literacy BC:

B. Allan Quigley, (2000). *Beyond participation and stereotypes: Towards the study of engagement in adult literacy education*. T. Sork, V. Chapman and R. St. Clair (Eds), *AERC 2000: Proceedings of the 41st Annual Adult Education Research Conference*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia, (pp. 366-371). (To be attached on-line).

B. Allan Quigley, (1997). *The non-participation of undereducated adults*. In P. Belanger and A. Tuijnman, (Eds.), *New patterns of adult learning: A six-country comparative study* (pp. 101-130). New York: Elsevier Science Inc. (Chapter to be attached on-line).

For more information about the conference,
or to find out how you can participate, contact:
Sandy Middleton at Literacy BC.
Phone 1-800-663-1293
or e-mail: Smiddleton@TheHub.capcollege.bc.ca

Highlights from National Follow-up Study

For the past two years, I have had the pleasure of working with Ellen Long, Director of Research for ABC CANADA, on an important national research study about participation in literacy education in Canada. This follow-up study of people seeking literacy services in Canada builds on research conducted by Literacy BC and documented in the 1999 report, It Guided Me Back to Learning: A Longitudinal Research Study on Calls to the Literacy BC Helpline. Following are some highlights from the national study.

Sandy Middleton

Highlights from: Patterns of Participation, Canadian Literacy and Upgrading Programs - Results of a National Follow-up Study

ABC CANADA in partnership with Literacy BC

Prepared by Ellen Long, Director of Research, ABC CANADA

In spite of increased outreach efforts, recruitment and retention of learners remain two of the most significant challenges facing the literacy field. Only a fraction of eligible adults have ever enrolled in a literacy program and among those who have, attrition rates are high. Patterns of participation in literacy education are complex and, until now, we have had little Canadian research to guide our understanding.

In early 1999, 55 literacy groups across Canada did the groundwork for a national follow-up study by collecting names and phone numbers of people who were seeking information or services. Six to eight months later, we conducted phone interviews with 338 people who had given their earlier permission to be contacted. This large-scale systematic study provides an unprecedented opportunity to look at the conditions which promote or deter successful participation in literacy education in Canada.

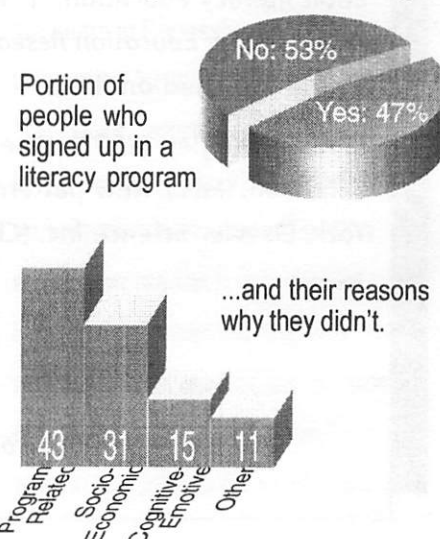
The full report of this study will be available this fall, and will include an extensive discussion of the highly complex multiple factors affecting participation. For now, we offer a few highlights of the study's central findings.

After placing the initial call to a literacy group, 47% of callers went on to sign up for a program and 53% did not (Figure 1). Figure 2 illustrates the main reasons people did not sign up for a program. Like the recently released Literacy BC study, we found that program-related reasons were the main factor deterring enrolment for the largest percentage of callers (43%). Program-related factors include not being called back by the program, long waiting lists, inconvenient class times and locations, wrong type of program content or structure, and having to pay for the program or tutor.

Following program-related reasons, socioeconomic-circumstantial reasons were the next largest main factor reported by those who did not

enroll (31%). Within this group, more than half were dealing with work-related conflicts and a third were dealing with care of children and other family and social responsibilities. The availability of different class times and assistance with childcare could significantly reduce the impact of socioeconomic-circumstantial deterrents to enrolment.

Cognitive-emotive reasons were the least likely (15%) to be cited as the main reason for not enrolling, which stands in sharp contrast to a common belief that fear and stigma are the main problems deterring



Highlights from National Follow-up Study (Cont'd)

potential learners. However, we might reasonably expect that cognitive-emotive factors may play a higher part for people who have not called in the first place.

Disturbingly, 8% of the people who signed up were still on waiting lists at the

point of follow-up, which was six to eight months after the initial call. Of those who did not sign up, 35% reported a long waiting period as one of the reasons for not signing up. Seventy-five percent of those who did not enroll said they

would call again in the future. Our findings clearly suggest that much needs to happen to ensure that the outcomes are different when they do call again.

For a copy of this study when it is published this fall, contact Literacy BC.

Action Research? Practitioner-based Research? Research into Practice?

by Marina Niks

What do these terms mean? How do they relate to you and your practice?

Have you ever wanted to know more about a particular problem you encountered in your daily practice?

Are you proud of an achievement or a technique you developed?

Did you know literacy practitioners are currently discussing these topics? Are you aware that there are literacy practitioners engaged in doing literacy research? Did you know there is help available to help you do research too?

Interested? Read on!

Through the **Adult Literacy Cost-shared Program** some resources have been committed to continue to help **build the literacy research network** and to **strengthen the research capacity in the literacy field in BC**. Here are some of the planned initiatives for the current year:

Research Friend Available

The relationship with UBC is continuing and Marina Niks will be our research friend again this year.

Individual help

Marina is anxious to help you develop research questions and strategies to answer those questions. You can contact Marina with any research related question (no question is too small!) by phone at (604) 738-8942, via email at miniks@unixg.ubc.ca, or on FirstClass - send a private message to Marina Niks or post a message in the Research conference.

Group discussion

Marina will continue to encourage conversations about research topics on the Research sub-conference on First Class. You are welcome to participate with your views, questions, comments, or topic suggestions. Rovers (read

only visitors J) are always welcome!

Training Workshops

Following the success of two previous experiences, more workshops are in the works for the current year. Previous workshops have covered a wide variety of research related topics such as how to write research questions, submitting research proposals, data collection techniques, data analysis, report writing, etc.

Keep tuned to learn more about these opportunities!

Literature Summaries

A new feature for this year is being introduced. Bonnie Soroake will be working on producing resources that literacy practitioners might use to improve their own practice based on the current literacy research findings. The goal is to link research theory with literacy practice. Ideas or suggestions on topics are welcome – let Marina know.

IALS Report ...

Literacy in the Information Age

The final report of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) “Literacy in the Information Age” was released on June 14, 2000. It is a joint publication of Statistics Canada and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The report compares the literacy skills of adults (ages 16 - 65) in 20 countries: Australia, Belgium (Flanders), Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. The study provides the world's first comparable estimates of the level and distribution of literacy skills in adult populations and offers new insights in the factors that influence the development of skills at home and at work.

Key findings:

- Overall, Canada ranks amongst the top countries on the prose literacy scale, but ranks in the middle on the quantitative and document literacy scales. Sweden and the other Nordic countries were consistently at the top while the United States and the U.K. rank lower than Canada. Chile is the lowest ranked.
- In Canada the discrepancy between people with low and high literacy skills is far larger than in many European countries, such as Germany and the Nordic countries.
- While the scores between countries differ considerably, no country does so well that it can be said to have no literacy problems. Even in Sweden 28% of adults are at the lowest levels (1 & 2) while in Canada 42% of adults are at levels 1 & 2 (prose scale).
- Canada has the second largest number of adults (23%) at the highest level of prose literacy (levels 4/5). Sweden is the only country with a higher number at this level (32%).
- In all countries, young secondary school graduates (age 20 - 25) have higher literacy skills than non-graduates, but in some countries the gains to literacy from education are greater than in others. In Canada, the gains are substantial .

Note: Literacy is defined as the ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community - to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential. To measure proficiency levels in the processing of information, the IALS examined three literacy domains: prose, document and quantitative.

The report *Literacy in the Information Age* is now available from the OECD On-line Bookshop at <http://electrade.gfi.fr/cgi-bin/OECDBookShop.storefront/>.

Look what's New

Resources on our shelves...

Update on ...our Resource Library

The library at Literacy BC offers a unique and diverse collection of over 3000 catalogued literacy-related resources. Most are print materials, but resources are available in other mediums such as video, CD-ROM, audio- cassette, kits, and games. We develop our collection in the following areas, among others:

aboriginal literacy - adult basic education - clear language - computers and literacy - family literacy - learning disabilities - literacy and health - literacy programming - prison literacy - program development - seniors literacy - tutoring - women's literacy - workplace literacy

If you would like a more comprehensive listing of what's new on our shelves, contact May Chan at Literacy BC: Phone: 1-800-663-1293 or E-mail: lbc1@TheHub.capcollege.bc.ca

Family Literacy

My Extraordinary Family

A cooperatively written book from Open Doors to Family Literacy, a project of the YWCA of Prince Albert and the Prince Albert Literacy Network. (1998).

An illustrated children's book about a family and how they spend quality, "extraordinary" time together in the ordinariness of life.

Learning Games for Infants and Toddlers: a Playtime Handbook

Dr. J. Ronald Lally and Dr. Ira J. Gordon. Syracuse University, New York. New Readers Press. (1977)

A series of interactive, educational games for children from the ages of two months to two years.

Teacher Inquiry: Fraser-Cascade Teacher Research.

Research and Professional Development Division, B.C. Teachers' Federation. March 1999.

The results of year-long critical research work by eight experienced elementary teachers in the Fraser-Cascade School District of B.C. who share what they've learned in their career about teaching and learning. Their work was compiled here "to celebrate their dedication to teaching and learning, and stimulate new and future research by other classroom teachers." The teachers examine areas such as, "Writing strategies for elementary students who work slowly," and, "How can teachers help parents support their children's reading."

Growing into Literacy: PRINTS Program (Parents' Roles Interacting with Teacher Support)

William T. Fagan and Mary C. Cronin, Memorial University School of Continuing Education; and Education, Learning, Literacy Network, St. John's, Newfoundland.

PRINTS is a family/early literacy program designed to engage parents or caregivers in their young children's literacy development. The program can be used with preschool children of all ages, from birth to 5, and is suitable for parents with low-literacy skills. The PRINTS video and the accompanying *Train the Facilitator* Manual are intended for facilitators to help them

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Family Literacy

implement the program with parents and teachers. There is also a Parent Video and Handbook.

Canada's Charter Schools Initial Report: first year report of a two-year in-depth study of charter schools in Alberta

Dr. Beverly Lynn Bosetti, Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education. (1998).

This study examines the context, characteristics, challenges and effectiveness of Alberta's charter schools. How are they different from other public schools? Do they have a positive impact on student learning? What are their implications for the system at large? Here are some early lessons from the Alberta experience, as policymakers and the public seek to understand charter schools in a Canadian context.

Family Literacy for Credit: Facilitator Manual

Prince Albert Literacy Network (1999).

A resource designed to provide practice in communications, parenting, reading and interpersonal

skills. The book includes activities and discussions designed to provide guided, repetitive family literacy practice. Participants will learn by doing — the essential component of each family literacy session is active participation.

Reading is More than Phonics: A Parents' Guide for Reading with Beginning or Discouraged Readers, and Coaching Young Readers (VIDEO)

Vera Goodman, Reading Wings, Calgary (1999).

A simple, common-sense guide to the reading process with practical strategies to enable those who are helping others learn to read more effectively. The guide covers topics such as how children learn, phonics and experience, reading with understanding, spelling and sight words, and choosing the right book. The 24-minute video teaches simple, enjoyable ways to create a fail-proof reading environment, eliminate tension and anxiety, build and restore confidence, choose materials of interest, and develop speed and fluency.

Ready ... Set, Read! A Guide to Running Family Literacy Nights: Spruceland Elementary School's Family Literacy Program

Prepared by Patricia Hanki, College of New Caledonia. A BC literacy cost-shared project (1999).

The report presents an overview of the Prince George school's *Ready...Set, Read!* family literacy program, including its history and goals, structure, suggested activities, and community support. Find out what is involved in planning a family literacy night. Informative appendices cover announcements, job descriptions, agendas, sample evaluation forms and materials.

Canada's Changing Families: Challenges to Public Policy

The Vanier Institute of the Family (1994).

This collection of essays is intended to stimulate discussion of social and policy initiatives relating to families. The central question of the book is how can these programs and policies be made more sensitive to and supportive of family life. The

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Family Literacy

book was published during the International year of the Family (1994) with contributions from researchers, scholars and public policy experts.

Resources for Women

Lifelines: Writings by Kelowna Women

Okanagan University College, Kelowna Women's Resource Centre, Elizabeth Fry Society. A B.C. literacy cost-shared project. (2000)

A group of women formed the Kelowna Lifewriting Workshop in October 1999 to explore their thoughts and feelings through writing, based on the strategies in Deborah Morgan's workbook, *Writing Out Loud*. Now they have produced this book. "As we became more comfortable writing, we created our own themes. As we wrote and shared, we developed insight into each other's lives. This heartfelt sharing enabled us to encourage, support, and celebrate our victories with one another. Writing and sharing our stories has helped provoke, heal, encourage, and inspire us. Through this group, many of us have been able to

Resources for Women

change our stumbling blocks to stepping stones."

The Back-to-School Survival Guide for Women 2nd edition, updated and expanded

BC Network of the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW). Nora D. Randall with Wendy Jang. 1995.

Women have many reasons for going back to school — for personal growth, to help their kids, to strengthen their community, to get a better job, or some combination of the above. This guide focuses on returning to school in order to enter or improve your position in the job market. The guide is organized so that you look at yourself first - how you learn, and how you can find and think about information. Then you look at the job market. Next you examine what you'll have to organize in order to go back to school - your time, your family, transportation and money." The guide offers useful information about school boards, colleges, universities and institutes, Employment Centres, private post-secondary institutions and distance education.

Changes in this revised edition include increased participation by immigrant and Aboriginal women sharing their voices and experiences.

Practitioner Resources

Canadian Adult Reading Assessment (CARA)

Pat M. Campbell, Flo Brokop, Grass Roots Press, Literacy Services of Canada Ltd., Edmonton. 2000.

with Student's Assessment Booklet/ Instructor's Manual & CD-ROM

CARA is an informal reading inventory that can determine a student's instructional reading level and specific strengths and weaknesses in word recognition and comprehension. The instructors' manual/CD-ROM provides step-by-step instructions on how to administer, score and interpret CARA. The student's assessment booklet contains 50 graded passages, ranging in readability from grades 1-12.

For more information or to order, contact Grass Roots Press, Literacy Services of Canada at 1-888-303-3213.

Look what's New

Resources

Resources

on our shelves...

Practitioner Resources

Handbook for literacy tutors (1999)

Chris Harwood, People, Words & Change (Ottawa) and Ottawa-Carleton Coalition for Literacy. Pilot edition.

This comprehensive handbook has been created to provide the information you most need to work as a literacy volunteer. It is intended to be a source of useful material for new or experienced tutors in any type of literacy program. Some of the topics covered are literacy and numeracy, accessibility issues (learning and physical disabilities, developmental challenges), teaching reading, writing, and spelling, and learning styles.

Media Information Project

Literacy Coordinators of Alberta. 1999.

A media kit of ideas for promoting literacy issues and events in the community through news releases, newspaper articles, public service announcements, print advertising, posters, flyers, and brochures. The kit includes information on how to conduct interviews and how to get community support, as

well as sample action plans and fact sheets based on Family Literacy Day and International Literacy Day. The kit also contains samples of promotional material on tape and disk.

Literacy Coordinators' Practical Guide - National Version

Edited by Elaine Cairns, Carol McCullough, and Janet Robertson, Further Education Society of Alberta. 1999.

Sponsored by Literacy Coordinators of Alberta, this resource contains practical information about the role of a literacy coordinator delivered by experienced coordinators who know what the concerns and responsibilities are. The book includes detailed bibliographies of recommended literacy and ESL resources, and extensive appendices of sample forms, job descriptions, instructional handouts, and literacy organizations.

Clear Writing and Literacy: How to Recognize Clear Writing, How to Use It, How to Convince Others to Use It.

Prepared for the Ontario Literacy Coalition by Ruth Baldwin. Revised 2nd ed.

This booklet is about writing to be understood. It will give you some ideas about what makes material difficult to read, and some tips on how to communicate better. The ideas you will find here can be applied to any kind of writing. However, they are most important if you are writing for adults who are not comfortable getting information from print, either because they don't read well, or because English is not their first language.

Literacy and Learning Disabilities

Landmark East School Adult Literacy

Landmark East School, Wolfville, Nova Scotia. 1999.

Using the expertise developed over 20 years working with learning disabled adolescents, this school conducted a three-year pilot project to research and develop a remedial program to meet the educational and vocational needs of adult learners with specific learning disabilities. This resource evaluates the program, curriculum, and outcomes, through interviews with staff and students, and makes recommendations for developing similar programs.

Literacy and Learning Disabilities

Special Needs Assessment Procedures: A Guide to Ensure Equal Access to Literacy Programs for Adults with Disabilities

Pat Hatt, *Toronto District School Board, the National Literacy Secretariat*. 2000.

The information in this guide is organized in five sections, each dealing with a group of disabilities — cognitive, learning, motor, psychiatric and sensory. Each section contains some basic information about the disability, including its common causes and manifestations, and some information on recognizing when a person is experiencing it. Some suggestions are offered on how you can work more effectively with learners who have disabilities.

Destination Literacy: Identifying and Teaching Adults with Learning Disabilities

The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC). 2000.

This resource builds upon new research on adult literacy and learning disabilities and LDAC's work in the literacy

field over the last 10 years. The book offers practical teaching strategies and useful information for those who work or volunteer in this field and whose role is to identify and assist adults with LD. The section on *Screening and Academic Assessments of Adults at Risk for Learning Disabilities* provides an easy-to-use questionnaire and checklists, and a case study to guide the reader through the screening process. In *Teaching Strategies*, tips for reading, writing, spelling and math are provided in easy-to-follow detail. The *Technology* section explores a variety of technological tools and devices that help compensate and accommodate people with learning disabilities. In *Lesson Ideas*, a variety of easy-to-use lesson plan strategies provides tutors with useful information and materials for diverse literacy levels.

If you prefer, you can order directly (\$50 + GST + postage) from The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (in Ottawa) at Fax: (613) 235-5391 or email: kathiew@istar.ca

On-Line Literacy Tool

The Canadian literacy community now has access to an on-line version of the **Canadian Literacy Thesaurus/Thésaurus canadien d'alphabétisation**, thanks to a grant from the National Literacy Secretariat. The Thesaurus is a list of subject terms in English and French which are specific to literacy practices and activities in Canada. It can be used to provide subject access to collections of literacy materials, and will also be of interest to those who wish to familiarize themselves with terminology in the field.

To view the Thesaurus, go to: <http://www.thesaurusalpha.org/thesaurus/index.htm>

The Thesaurus can be used to index documents — print, audiovisual, or electronic. It can also be used to organize reading lists and bibliographies. People can consult the Thesaurus when searching in existing databases such as library catalogues. The Thesaurus will be helpful to people who wish to familiarize themselves with terminology or emerging concepts in the Canadian literacy field.

The Thesaurus is produced and maintained by the Canadian Literacy Thesaurus Coalition.

For more information, contact:

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Focus on Developments in Family Literacy ...

The October 1999 Throne Speech and the February 2000 budget committed the federal government to reach an agreement with the provinces and territories on child development by December of this year through the National Children's Agenda. Now there is a campaign to push this forward.

The *Sign on for Canada's Kids* Campaign is urging you to sign a petition to call on the federal/provincial/territorial governments to meet their commitment to a publicly funded and publicly accountable system of Early Childhood Development (ECD) services.

The web site for the petition is: www.signonforcanadaskids.org

The deadline to return petitions is November 30, 2000.

For more information about the campaign, contact:

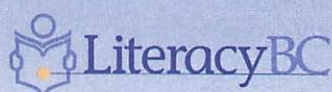
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